

WHAT IS EUrope?

Media, public and policy actors' perspectives

Nora Siklodi

nora.siklodi@port.ac.uk



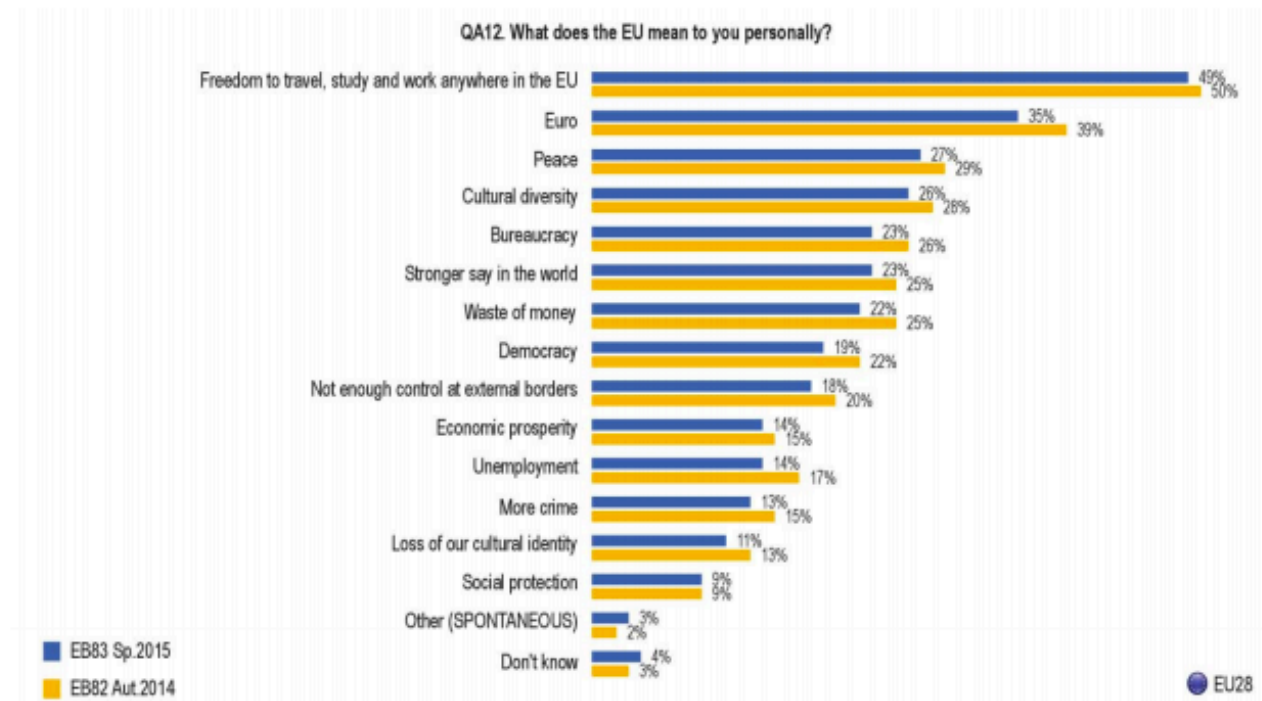
Understanding public attitudes

- The “problem of ideology” (Campbell et al. 1960) = the structure (or lack thereof) of mass political attitudes
 - If structured meaningfully → exhibit constraint on different issues (and provide predictability)
 - **Problem:** “large portions of the electorate do not have meaningful beliefs” (Converse 1964: 245)
 - **Result:** “conflicted” individuals simultaneously expressing support for symbolic conservatism (economic issues) and operational liberalism (socio-cultural issues) and vice versa (Stimson, 2004)
 - Importance of political sophistication (indicated by knowledge, education, interest, etc.)

Public perceptions of/ attitudes towards EUrope

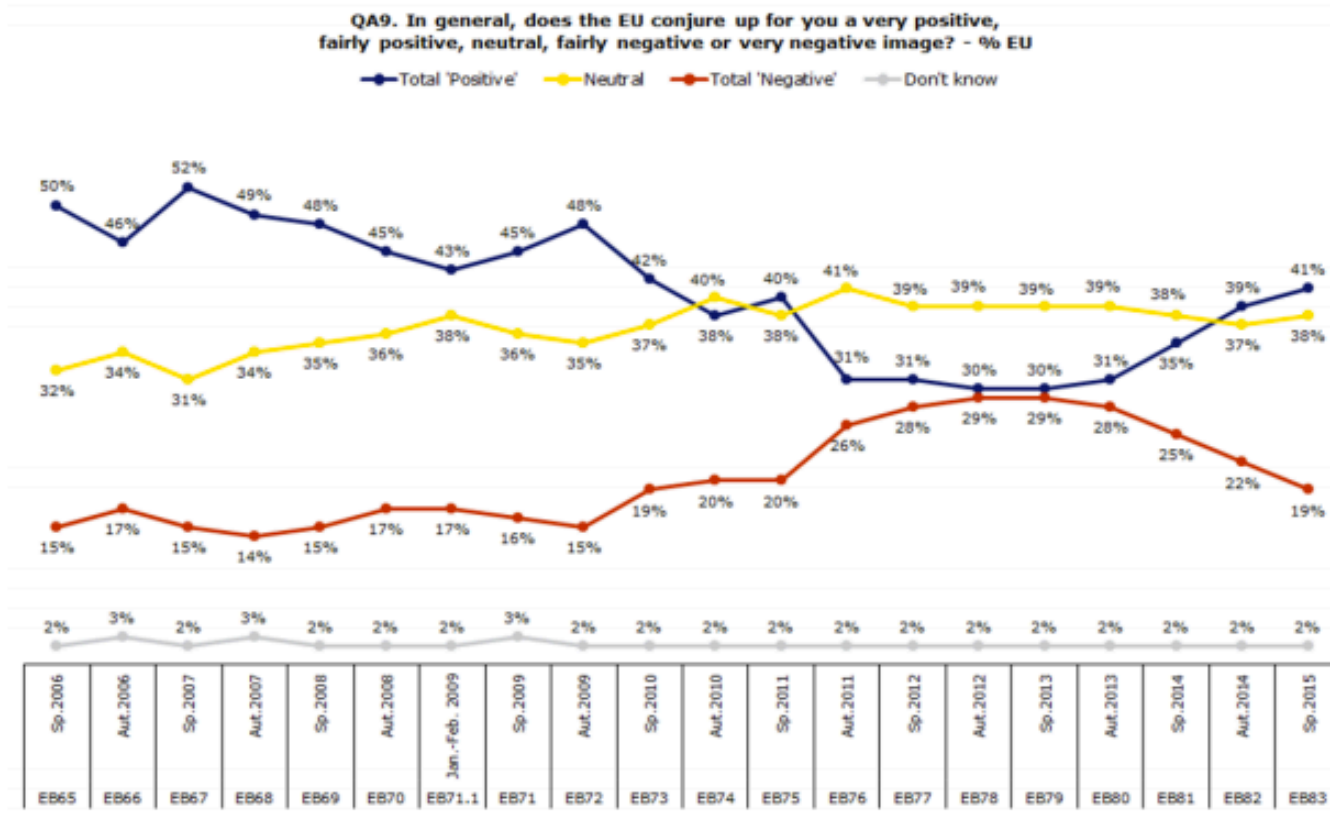
- Unidimensionality linked to support for more OR less EUropean integration
- Qualitative studies show majority of citizens indifferent towards the EU (White, 2011; Duchesne et al., 2013)
- Even more, quant shows the EU bucks “the trend”
 - Levels of ambivalence (=conflict of core beliefs and/or coexistence of + and – attitudes) towards the EU *increase* with political sophistication
 - Lowest levels of political sophistication + a complete lack of cues on the EU → indifference among citizens (Stoeckel, 2012)
 - Trust in EU institutions and attachment to Europe decrease indifference and ambivalence about the EU
- Hooghe and Marks (2008) if attached to Europe *and* MS → higher support for integration than exclusive nationalists
- Personality also shapes public attitudes (Bakker and Vreese, 2016)

Public perceptions of/ attitudes towards EUrope today I

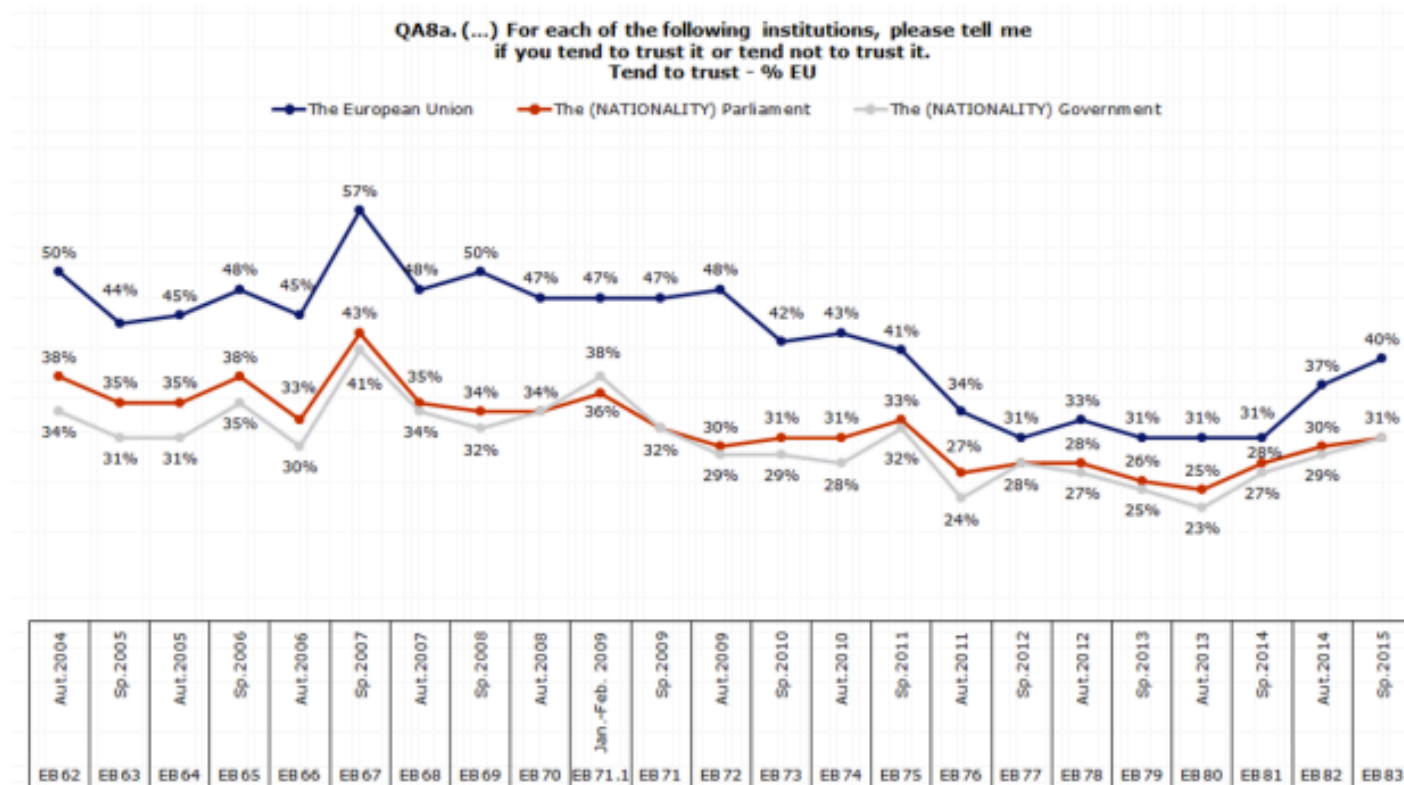


Several answers

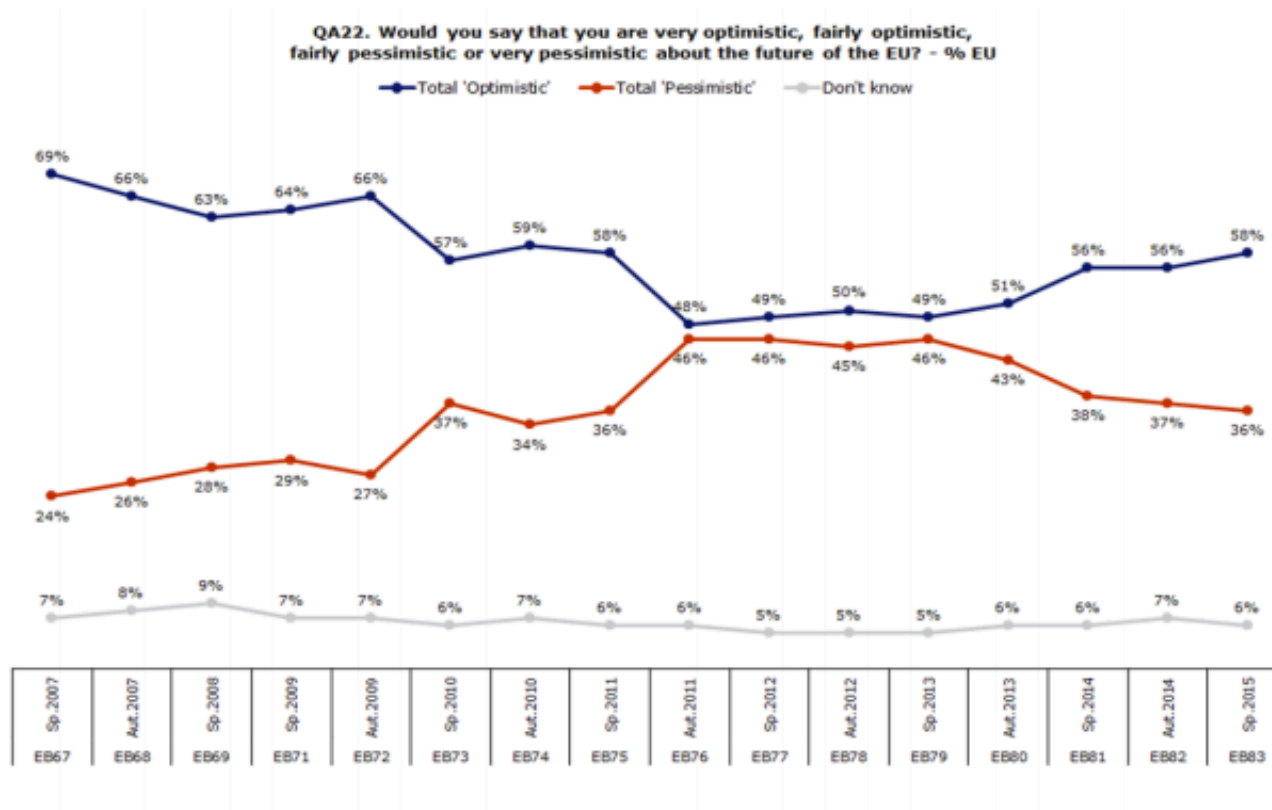
Public perceptions of/ attitudes towards EUrope today II



Public perceptions of/ attitudes towards EUrope today III



Public perceptions of/ attitudes towards EUrope today IV

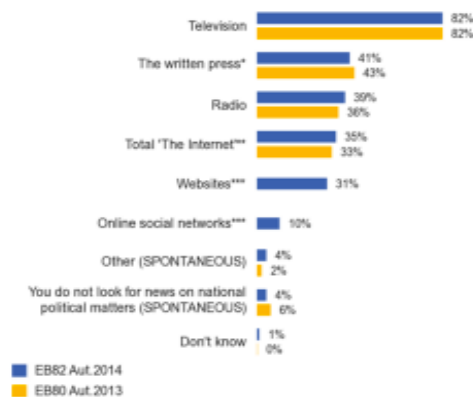


Media perceptions of EUrope

- *Why relevant?*
 - Public attitudes = a “cueing process” in which citizens rely on cues and ‘the clearer the cues → more stable and coherent attitudes (Steenbergen and De Vries, 2012)
- Cross-national and over-time variation in news media coverage of EU – *a communication deficit?* (Boomgarden et al. 2013)
 - Importance of whether national parties are divided *and* if, overall, there more negative positions towards the EU the more visible the news
 - Increases in EU news visibility from one election to the next and the *Europeanness* of the news are determined by a country’s elite positions

But *is* there (enough) coverage?

QE4T. Where do you get most of your news on national political matters?



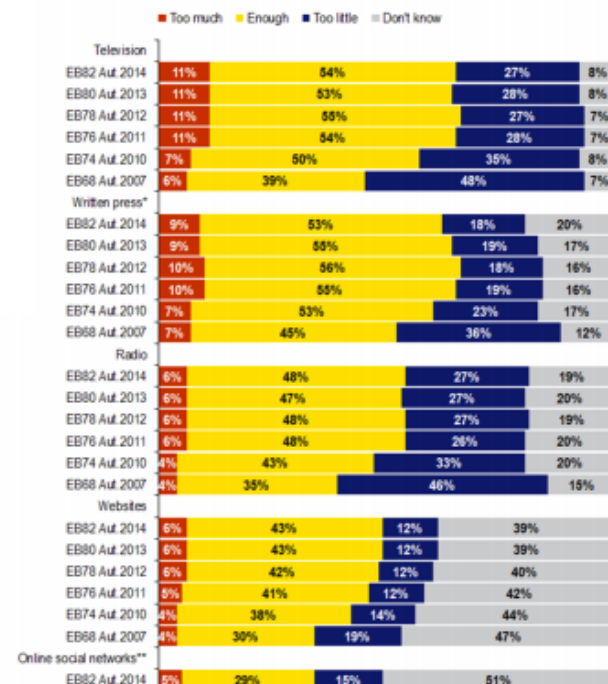
Multiple answers possible

QE5T. Where do you get most of your news on European political matters?



Multiple answers possible

QE7. Generally speaking, do you think that the (NATIONALITY) ... talk(s) too much, about the right amount or too little about the EU? - % EU



*In previous surveys: the press

** New item

But *is* there (enough) coverage? (Boomgarden et al., 2013)

[Eurovision debate \(2014\)](#)

COMPARE

[Trump v Clinton \(2016\)](#)

Appendix Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
<i>News outlet level</i>					
Dummy TV newscasts	307	0	1	0.44	0.49
Dummy PBS newscast	307	0	1	0.23	0.42
Dummy Tabloid newspaper	307	0	1	0.15	0.36
EU news visibility	307	0	0.53	0.09	0.08
Europeanness (EU news only)	270	0	1	0.25	0.22
Number of Brussels journalists	307	0	18	1.20	2.47
<i>Context level (country * election)</i>					
Dummy co-occurring election	67	0	1	0.26	0.44
Share EU exports	67	42.42	90.27	70.19	10.05
Weighted mean parties' EU position	67	4.53	9.92	7.42	1.28
Dispersion parties' EU position	67	0.06	3.11	1.28	0.73
<i>Country level</i>					
Country population 2009 (in 1000s)	27	399	82,217	18,407	23,268
Number of EP elections 2009	27	2	7	4.33	2.30

Notes

EUropean media coverage as *another* political battleground (HUN example)

- *Hungary*: National v independent outlets, see coverage of [#quotareferendum](#) – even after the result, making this an invalid voting!
- EU v *European news actually* in the NEWS? [Politico.eu](#)

TUDTA?
A párizsi merényletet
bevándorlók követték el.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

TUDTA?
A bevándorlási válság kezdete óta
ugrásszerűen emelkedik a nők elleni
zaklatások száma Európában.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

TUDTA?
Csak Líbiából közel egymillió
bevándorló akar Európába jönni.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

TUDTA?
Brüsszel egy városnyi illegális bevándorlót
akar Magyarországra telepíteni.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

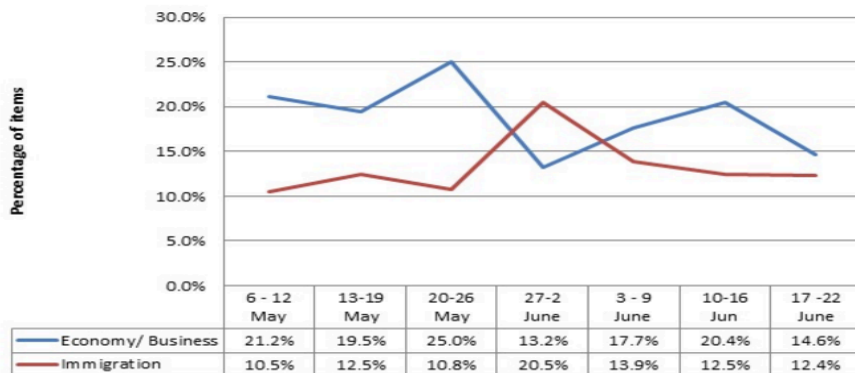
TUDTA?
Tavaly másfél millió illegális
bevándorló érkezett Európába.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

TUDTA?
A bevándorlási válság kezdete óta Európában
több mint 300-an haltak meg terrortámadásban.
NÉPSZAVAZÁS
2016. OKTÓBER 2.

OR EUrope as *another* battleground for reader/viewership

- *Brexit* coverage – split between media outlets and newspapers
- Coverage focused on (a) the drama and dynamics of the campaign, (b) the economic implications of leaving the EU and (c) immigration and border controls (Study by Loughborough Uni, 2016)
- So as to 'keep' viewership? (Daddow, 2016)

Figure 1.1: prominence of 'Economy' and 'Immigration' news by sample week



Elite perceptions of EUrope

- Elite perceptions are unidimensional
 - Political sophistication: More pronounced differences in stability and constraint (Hill and Kriesi, 2001)
- Same as citizens, politicians divided along Q of more/less European integration
 - Initially pro-integration – and still to some extent EU seen as an elite project
 - But these are not stable across the various levels of policy-making (local, national, regional or EU) or across time) (Sanders et al., 2013
 - Consider changes in EU support from Labour, Conservatives and LibDems
- Exception: EU elite (esp. COM) own approach – but also to some extent EP- always MORE integration
 - EU= an “area of freedom, security and justice with respect for fundamental rights” (Lisbon Treaty, Art. 67)
 - Realit ycheck needed? (France, Belgium, treatment of refugees, roma, etc.)
- Non-EU elite
 - Attempts to define what is European in opposition to the EU, most visible in Russia (Flenley, 2016) - Yet condoned Brexit

So what's next?

- To establish a European public sphere and less 'communication' and democracy deficit Q is

How to re-align diverging attitudes towards and understanding of EUrope?

How to enhance the visibility of and public attitudes towards EUrope?

- OR, in light of move to possible disintegration

Do we need to re-align these?

Let's debate

- What does EUrope mean to YOU?
 - Have you EVER considered yourself a *European*? *Explain what this means to you please*
 - Media coverage (or it's lack of): any impact on you, personally?
 - How about your friends and family?
 - How about your national fellows and the political elite?
- Two groups
 - Group 1: EUrope = the EU and regional integration that is *politically* centralised
 - Group 2: EUrope= focus on “the continent” and socio-cultural similarities
 - Consider pros/ cons of each standing point and identify 5 factors for/against each